**ACTIVE PEDAGOGY: Response to Intervention**

***1. Link change element to desired change***

***Rationale for desired change:***

Response to Instruction (RTI) provides the structure for the 21st century initiative where MCPS increases student achievement through effective instructional practices that meet the needs of all students, provides on-going professional development and coaching, employs data based decision making, promotes educational leadership and fosters parent involvement.

RTI allows teachers to utilized all types of instruction (direct, guided inquiry, project based learning, etc…) based on student need.

Teachers integrate teaching vocabulary, comprehension, and phonics across all subject areas to increase reading proficiency and academic success.

A tiered system with a continuum of supports and different levels of intensity provides opportunities for all children to receive instruction in a way that is most conducive to their learning.

RTI creates an efficient service delivery model where teachers collaborate and take responsibility for all students to optimize learning.

RTI requires core reading and math instruction to effectively meet the needs of students and prevent inadequate academic growth and skill deficits thereby increasing student success and engagement when participating in inquiry based learning and projects.

**2.1 *We might create greater opportunities for RTI…***

* arrange schedules so students receive adequate amounts of instruction
* provide professional support and coaching to increase academic engagement and learning
* provide instruction based on student need, not teaching philosophies
* increase team teaching and collaboration between and across grade levels
* focus on effective instruction rather than student deficits
* monitor student progress to inform instruction and increase academic achievement

**2.2 *Why is this change desirable?***

Research shows that the earlier you confront deficit skills the more successful the outcome. This will result in proficiency and in the long run save the district money.

Students of all ability levels will experience success and be prepared for 21st century challenges.

Students proficient in reading and math will be able to read and comprehend important content and become more confident in learning and inquiry.

Students will be more actively involved and engaged when instruction is delivered at their ability level.

Expectations for all students are high resulting in increased academic gains.

Flexible scheduling and grouping allows students to receive appropriate instruction and allows continued support as students improve in skills or need additional support.

Students reading at grade level are less likely to drop out or fail in high school.

Students are screened for skill deficits and able to immediately access interventions.

Fewer students of minority and poverty will be identified as learning disabled and have the skills for post school success.

***2.3 Who will benefit from this change? How will they benefit?***

The 20% of students who currently do not make adequate academic progress in our current system will receive instruction to help them achieve at or above grade level.

Gifted students will be able to participate in accelerated courses, advanced reading and math groups and writing projects to maintain or improve academic growth.

Students at grade level will continue to receive appropriate instruction to support their continued growth and prevent skill deficits.

Teachers collaborate and support each other to find ways to improve instruction, increasing their job satisfaction.

Administrators share educational leadership and do not feel pressure to have all answers or know everything.

Parents feel more supported when their children are receiving interventions and instruction that promote growth and academic success.

***2.4 What are the unintended consequences when making this change?***

General Education teachers may view Special Education and Title One staff as the sole intervention providers and do not team with Title One and Special Education teachers to share students, resources and expertise.

Teachers and parents may feel they can no longer refer students for special education services and become frustrated.

Teachers may feel there is too much emphasis on reading and math and feel disenfranchised that their subject area or specialty is not valued.

Special education staff may fear their jobs will be cut if fewer students are referred for special education classes or worry too many students will be dumped on them and only serve students if they are identified as a student with a disability

**Teachers may need to change the way they teach and interact with one another:**

Teachers must learn to trust each other and share their students in order to provide targeted small group instruction based on student need.

Teachers will focus on

The teacher’s role becomes more facilitative. A facilitator needs to display a different set of skills than a traditional teacher:

Instead of telling, a facilitator asks;

Instead of lecturing from the front, a facilitator supports from the back;

Instead of giving answers according to a set curriculum, a facilitator provides guidelines and creates the environment for the learner to arrive at his or her own conclusions;

Instead of mostly giving a monologue, a facilitator is in continuous

dialogue with the learners by probing, prompting, and redirecting.

Teachers may feel less in control of their classrooms as their students become more actively involved.

**The learning environment may need to change:**

Teachers may need to increase differentiated and small group instructional activities based on student needs and skill deficits or strengths.

**Teacher support will need to be provided:**

Supportive teacher training will need to be provided to help teachers understand the basics of specific teaching techniques to increase academic engagement and evidenced based instructional practices.

***2.5 What are the known obstacles to making this change happen?***

Many schools struggle to provide flexible scheduling to meet the needs of all students and provide adequate time for instruction.

Many educators feel they are responsible for children in their classroom and are reluctant to embrace the model that each school staff is responsible for all students’ achievement.

Many educators, parents, and other members of society do not understand the need for direct instruction and how it is beneficial to students who are struggling to learn.

Many educators underestimate the amount of time and energy it takes to remediate skill deficits in students and think RTI is not working. The longer the wait to remediate the longer it takes to address the skill deficit.

Developing and utilizing a data system to track student progress and achievement is time consuming.

Many educators, parents and community are not aware of the number of students in the district not reading at grade level according to DIBELS and MAPS and fail to see the urgency in intervention and support for struggling learners.

***Who stands not to benefit from this change?***

Organizations selling standardized tests (I.Q., Memory)

Teachers not willing to take responsibility for all children.

***2.6. Is it feasible and sustainable?***

RTI has already been adopted by MCPS and is being successfully implemented in many schools. Additionally RTI is written into No Child Left Behind, Individuals with Disabilities Act, and is supported both by the state and nationally allowing for on-going training and district support.

RTI is a process for systems change where all staff is involved and is not reliant on one administrator or point person. As more teachers experience success with academic outcomes, the less likely they will be to discontinue a practice.

RTI is a process where districts or schools assess resources and staff allocation and decide how to efficiently and effectively distribute these resources to meet the needs of its student population. However, there may be a need for intervention specialists that support school staff in providing services to students of all ability levels.

***3.What supporting evidence do you have, or recommend is collected to justify, or refute, the inclusion of this change element?***

**Research and evidence in support**

Difficulties in decoding and word recognition are at the core of most reading

difficulties. *(Lyon, 1997)*

In a sample of 54 students, Juel found that there was a 88% probability

of being a poor reader in fourth grade if you were a poor reader in first

grade without intervention. *(Juel, 1988).*

Assuming students will ‘catch up’ with practice as usual is not wise. Catching up is a low probability occurrence. – The bottom 20-25% will require a very different kind of effort in both the short and long run. *(President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002)*

60% all students in special education are those with specific learning disabilities

Up to 80% of SLD students are there because they haven’t learned to read.

Students in Special Education:

– Have less exposure to regular ed. curricula and have fewer regular ed. friends

– Academic achievement is no better than like, non-identified peers

Few students in special education ever close the achievement gap, even fewer exit.

Placement in Special Education is a life altering event

*(President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002)*

Reading as Gateway Skill 75% of the variance in academic achievement is attributable to how well a student can read. (*National Institute for Literacy)*

In CA, AZ and IN if the child isn’t reading on 4th grade level when tested, they will plan to budget building another jail cell. (*Paul Schwatz, Principal in Residence, U. S. Dept. of Education Source)*

70 percent of prisoners in state and federal systems can be classified as illiterate.

85 percent of all juvenile offenders rate as functionally or marginally illiterate.

43 percent of those whose literacy skills are lowest live in poverty.

*(National Institute for Literacy)*

Approximately two-thirds of eighth and twelfth grader students read at a level of

“less than Proficient” *(NAEP, 2006)*

Students in the lowest 25 percent of their class in reading are 20 times more likely to drop out then the other 75 percent *(U.S. DOE, 2003)*

More 7,000 students drop out of high school every school day – 75% end up

incarcerated. *(Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007)*

The majority of children (95% +) who enter kindergarten and elementary school at-risk for reading failure can learn to read at average or above levels, but only if they are identified early and provided with effective, systematic, and explicit instruction.

*(Reid Lyon, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Education Reform of the U.S. House of Representatives 2001)*

**Criticism**

An empirically‐validated RTI model could be used to prevent learning problems, but comprehensive evaluations should occur whenever necessary for SLD identification purposes, and children with SLD need individualized interventions based on specific learning needs, not merely more intense interventions designed for children in general education. *(Learning Disabilities Association of America, White Paper 2010)*